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New La Porte Police Dept. D.A.R.E. vehicle hits the streets



La Porte Police Department D.A.R.E. Officer Yvonne Stanley displays the agency's latest addition

The La Porte Police Department unveiled its new D.A.R.E. Program Vehicle on Saturday at the La Porte Airplane and Car Show. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education and the 30 year old highly acclaimed program is designed to give young people the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence.

The 2010 Dodge Charger was purchased new using money seized from drug dealers and outfitted through generous donations of products and services from business in and around La Porte. The most striking feature of the vehicle is its custom paint job depicting the many unique features of La Porte as well as real to life images of emergency responders at work within the community. The custom paint job was done courtesy of La Porte's own Coupland Signs and represents over 50 hours of donated time from the company's owner and resident artist, Chuck Coupland.

"This car is designed to draw and keep the attention of the D.A.R.E. Program's target audience and it really showcases the City of La Porte" said Chief of Police Ken Adcox. "We are really proud of it and grateful to the many area businesses, like Coupland Signs, that helped bring this car to life". Other businesses that donated products or services to the new D.A.R.E. vehicle include, Charlie Hinds Paint & Body, Discount Tire Co., Stanley Parts & Equipment, Texas Honor Ride, R&R Kustom Kar Stereo, La Porte Police Officers Association, Best Buy Stores, Viper, and Blue Knights Texas VII.

The D.A.R.E. car will be piloted by La Porte Police Department's D.A.R.E. Officer, Yvonne Stanley. Officer Stanley is a 16 year veteran of the La Porte Police Department and has served a total of 12 years as the City's primary D.A.R.E. officer. Stanley expressed both excitement for the program's addition of the D.A.R.E. car, as well as an immeasurable level of gratitude for the vehicle sponsorship base, stating that "From the very beginning of the vehicle's design process, I really hoped we could go beyond depicting just the Police Department, but also reflect several of our local land marks in a positive light." Stanley added, "The City of La Porte has so many things which we can all be proud of, and the local artist who completed the final design really captured the pride of La Porte in the finished product."

For car enthusiasts, the new vehicle is equipped with a 5.7-liter HEMI V-8 engine with a fuel-saving system that shuts down half of the cylinders when cruising at light throttle. A bit different from the standard off-the-lot version, this Charger has been modified to accommodate full-service police duty, with heavy-duty anti-lock brakes, front and rear stabilizer bars, a two-mode police-specific stability control system and 18-inch performance tires on steel wheels. Inside, the front cabin has been modified to serve as a mobile command center, with a police interface module for easy integration of police computer equipment. The D.A.R.E. car is also equipped with a full mobile theater, located in the vehicle's trunk; from which educational program videos can be shown.

Look for the agency's new 2011 D.A.R.E. Charger along local roadways and show Officer Stanley you support the D.A.R.E. program through a friendly smile, wave, or honk of your own horn.

For more information on La Porte Police Department's D.A.R.E. program, please call 281-471-2141 and ask to leave a message for Officer Stanley. Also, if you wish to learn more about the national D.A.R.E. program, log onto their website at www.dare.com.